

**CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 2019 QUARTERLY MEETING**

The Chesapeake Bay Commission held its fourth quarterly meeting of 2019 on Thursday and Friday, November 7-8, 2019 in Baltimore, MD.

Commission members in attendance:

- Delegate Robert Bloxom
- Delegate David Bulova
- Senator Sarah Elfreth
- PA Citizen Member, Warren Elliott (day 2 only)
- Representative Garth Everett
- Representative Keith Gillespie
- Senator Guy Guzzone
- Secretary Haddaway-Riccio
- Senator Emmett Hanger
- Senator Scott Martin
- Secretary Patrick McDonnell
- MD Citizen Member, Thomas “Mac” Middleton
- RDML Charles Rock
- Delegate Dana Stein
- Secretary Matt Strickler
- Representative Michael Sturla
- VA Citizen Member, Dennis Treacy
- Delegate Tony Wilt
- Senator Gene Yaw

Members not in attendance:

- Senator John Cosgrove

Staff:

- MD – David Goshorn
- PA – Aneca Atkinson and Jill Whitcomb
- VA – Ann Jennings

CBC Staff:

- Ann Swanson
- Jen Dieux
- Mark Hoffman
- Marel King
- Adrienne Kotula

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Senator Gene Yaw called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. and welcomed the Commission members to Baltimore, MD. Secretary McDonnell introduced Jill Whitcomb, the new Manager of Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Program Office, replacing Nicki Kasi.

WELCOME

Dr. Peter Goodwin, President of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences (UMCES) welcomed the Commission to the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET), part of the UMCES system. The UMCES system has six facilities that are mostly located in rural areas, but IMET is the exception.

AN INTRODUCTION TO IMET

Dr. Russell Hill, Executive Director & Professor at IMET, described the unique partnership that supports the facility and the work within, including 21 research programs, 42 labs and 25 entrepreneurial start-ups. Their work is focused on the protection and restoration of coastal marine systems, the sustainable use of marine resources and improvements to human health.

ROLL CALL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES & AGENDA

Executive Director Swanson then called the roll and a quorum was established. By unanimous consent, the Commission approved the minutes from the September meeting and the agenda for the November meeting without change.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

With the recent resignation of Delegate Tawanna Gaines, the office of Commission Chair was vacant. Senator Middleton nominated Senator Guzzone as Chair of the Commission, and Delegate Stein as Maryland's second member of the Executive Committee. Senator Elfreth seconded the nomination which was approved by unanimous consent.

HISTORY OF THE COMMISSION

As the Commission enters its 40th year, Ann Swanson provided a retrospective of the Commission's origin and accomplishments, including landmark policies and legislation that the Commission has championed, and its foundation in science-based decision-making.

REFLECTIONS: PAST ACHIEVEMENTS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Following Ann Swanson's presentation, four former members shared insights and recollections from their time on the Commission.

W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr., former Virginia Delegate and Secretary of Natural Resources was on the committee that hired Ann Swanson as Executive Director.

Ken Cole, former Pennsylvania Representative, chaired the Intergovernmental Relations Committee when Pennsylvania joined the Commission in 1985 and recalled the effort to bring Pennsylvania stakeholders to the table.

John Griffin, former Secretary of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, recalled being a part of the Commission-led Bi-State Blue Crab Advisory Committee that negotiated blue-crab management policy across Maryland and Virginia.

Representative Russ Fairchild, former Pennsylvania Representative, Chaired the Commission as it performed its groundbreaking analysis of the "Cost of a Clean Bay" and the important role that credible, fact-based information plays in restoring the Bay.

Several former Commission members in the audience also provided memories and advice for the current members.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission Members adjourned for the day at 4:00 p.m. and took a brief tour of IMET's Aquaculture Research Center.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Guzzone called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. He asked Executive Director Swanson to call the roll. With a quorum present, the Commission moved on to the substance of the morning.

CHAIRMAN'S LIGHTENING ROUND UPDATES

Ann Swanson provided a status report on the federal budget negotiations. The House version has the Chesapeake Bay Program at \$85 million. The Senate version has it at \$78.28 million. A letter is being circulated by Senator Chris Van Hollen (MD) for signature to all Members of Congress in the Chesapeake watershed, urging adoption of the House number. Ann will let the Commission members know of key members who have not yet signed and who might be persuaded by a call or e-mail.

Commission members were also provided with a brief update on the recent settlement agreement between Maryland and Exelon Generation to resolve the legal issues related to the relicensing of the Conowingo dam.

A COMPARISON OF STATE LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES – BUDGETS & JUDGES

Molly Brown, Senior Attorney and Director of Community Legal Education at the Chesapeake Legal Alliance followed-up her September presentation on the differences in the legislative processes in the Commission's member states with a comparison of state budget and judicial selection processes. Of note were the strength of the governor's role in Maryland, and the two-year budget cycle in Virginia. Also of note was the comparison of natural resources spending in each of the member states as compared to all 50 states.

ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS

Robert E. Beal, Director of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) provided a summary of the recently-updated assessment of the striped bass population. Half of the “removals” (harvest and mortality) of the population is due to catch-and-release mortality. Therefore, much of the policy moving forward will seek to reduce this rate. Specifically, ASMFC member states must submit plans to reduce their commercial harvest rates by 18%, implement specific size limits and mandate circle hooks. ASMFC has allowed conservation equivalency to be used in meeting the 18% commercial harvest reduction so the plans in each state may vary considerably.

Alex Aspinwall, Fisheries Management Data Analyst for the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, discussed how Virginia plans to achieve the harvest reduction via reducing the recreational harvest limit from two fish to one, as well as eliminating the spring trophy fishery. The commercial harvest will be reduced in 2020, along with limiting gill net mesh sizes and extending the number of days for a commercial maximum size limit.

Mike Luisi, Director of MD DNR’s Program Monitoring and Assessment Division, Fishing and Boating Service, discussed how Maryland plans to achieve the harvest reduction by adjusting the recreational seasons, implementing slot limits, as well as implementing timing restrictions in August and a 1 fish bag limit in August and September. A small reduction in the commercial fishery will also be implemented.

CHESAPEAKE BAY “EFFECTIVE BASINS”

At the September meeting, several Commission members had questions about the concept of “effective basins” and how it is used to prioritize watershed restoration activities. Emily Trentacoste, Environmental Scientist at EPA’s Chesapeake Bay Program explained the process to identify the relative extent that a pound of nutrient reduction in a given sub-watershed will impact dissolved oxygen in the mainstem of the Chesapeake Bay.

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chairman asked if anyone had any new business and whether anyone in the audience wished to provide comments to the Commission. There was no new business or public comment provided.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn and unanimously agreed to at 12:30 p.m.